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REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

The Development of Religion: A Study in Anthropology and Social Psychology. By IRVING KING. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1910. —pp. xxiii, 371.

This book may be described as an able and well-informed attempt to explain the complex and perplexing phenomena of primitive religion by the methods of a functional psychology closely affiliated with 'instrumental pragmatism.' The introductory chapter, however, discusses "the possibility and scope of the psychology of religion" in a way that at first seems Neo-Kantian rather than pragmatic. By a rational explanation is meant one in terms of efficient causation (p. 13). This applies to the values as well as to the contents of religious experience, since "all predications of value are themselves facts to be explained along with other experiences. The values and ends for the psychologist are probably quite different from those conceived by the possessor of the experience" (p. 15). The old method of analyzing the religious experience as so much static content, and attempting to reduce it to terms of emotion, will, or thought, themselves left undefined, is quite futile. Any significant advance, here as elsewhere, must "take account of the implications of the reaction as the fundamental psychic unit, . . . (and) attempt to treat the acts and states of consciousness with reference to their setting in the general life-process" (pp. 22-23).

The four following chapters all deal with the origin of religious attitudes and practices from the point of view thus defined. The theories of an innate or ultimate instinct or perception, accounting for religion, which Müller, Tiele, Jastrow, and others have adopted in various forms, involve a serious misuse of the term 'instinct,' which in its proper meaning does not necessarily imply consciousness; and they simply put to one side the real problem, which is "to show how and why, given certain acts, the religious consciousness, or attitude, has been built up" (p. 28). If anything is fundamental and common to the various religions of the world, it is not any objective ideas or beliefs, but an attitude which may be described as appreciative or valuational. The various forms of such an attitude are developed as elements in differing reactions to environmental situations, social and physical. For primitive man, at least, the practice or rite came first, and caused the belief.

Acts of the simplest type are instinctive or impulsive movements,

involving little or no consciousness. As they become more complicated, they become objects of attention, and gain significance and value for the agent. Dr. King distinguishes and illustrates four ways in which such complication has developed: conscious attempts to adopt means to end; the accumulation of chance variations in conduct, preserved and transmitted by social heredity and imitation; emotional overflow in imitative action when the real action is for the time prevented; and the results of the play impulse. Only as complex activities are thus developed is the value of the end fully realized, for the associated acts both engage the attention and give time for the consciousness of value to develop; and as such activities become habitual they may themselves "become the basis of many emotional values which have little or no connection with the original object of the acts."

The origin of valuation is connected with crises, then, occasioning in these various ways complications of conduct. "In the case of primitive man, the most acutely felt inhibitions were certainly those which affected the group as a whole"—the needs of food and of defence (p. 66). His tribe is in fact his universe. All his permanent values are therefore *social* values; social activities are the matrix from which all higher values, and especially the religious, emerge. The less definite the social structure, the vaguer and more uncertain religious values and ideas are.

Social values are religious for primitive man because they are ultimate. "The religious attitude may be said to be the consciousness of the value of action in terms of its ultimate organization," and this for the primitive mind is "activity organized with reference to the welfare of the tribe as a whole" (p. 85). The fifth chapter, on "The Origin of Religious Practices," is devoted to an extended review of various examples of such social activities, arising in the four ways already enumerated, and showing every gradation "from the purely playful and practical to the religious."

Common habits of action as the basis of commonly recognized values, however, will not of themselves explain the origin of ideas of deities. We must take account of another factor, the widely spread primitive belief or 'concept' of a mysterious power or force behind all natural phenomena. The plausible evidence that this, and not a personification of nature, is the savage's original way of viewing things, is reviewed in the sixth chapter. Not definitely conscious of personality in himself, he is not at first likely to ascribe it to other things. But he explains the strange, the wonderful, and the startling by the presence or possession of an undefined power or force, which is often conceived in a quasi-mechanical way. This idea is not in itself religious. It becomes so only as it is taken up in a valuational consciousness of the general type already described, and it contributes to the development of magic as well as of religion.

An interesting discussion of the relation of magic and religion follows (Chapter VII), introduced by a criticism of Frazer's well-known theory of the priority of the former, which seems to me the clearest and most adequate yet published. In the main Dr. King agrees with Jevons, that magic coexists with religion, but is distinguished from the latter by its relatively unsocial, secret, and individualistic character. But his genetic method enables him to avoid the tendency, which Jevons to some extent shares with Frazer, to describe the savage's original attitude towards his world in terms of the reflective understanding. There is a substratum of primitive practices from which both magic and religion develop, and which at first appear, as already described, as unreflective and spontaneous reactions, largely playful, emotional, or mimetic.

The eighth chapter discusses some "further considerations regarding the evolution of the religious attitude." This chapter would, it seems to me, be more properly placed if it followed the fifth. The attempts made to describe this evolution in terms of approach to some predetermined concept, such as monotheism, or as the unfolding of an original 'instinct' or 'idea,' are rejected as unsupported by the analogy of biology, from which it is held that they borrowed their method, and as contrary to the facts. Primitive religions arise from the activities of the group, and in them we do not find a constant element which gradually becomes explicit, but "an indefinite number of discrete attitudes, which, within limits, bear a definite relation to the matrix of experience out of which they have evolved" (p. 213). "The only continuity in religious evolution is the continuity of the social background, which, under varying conditions, produces varying types of religious growth" (p. 217). These statements apply especially to the primitive phases of religion. The more developed forms, like well-marked biological types, acquire a momentum and 'direction of movement' which makes their further development relatively independent of environment.

The "origin and development of concepts of divine personages," and the "problem of monotheism and of ethical conceptions of the deity" are the subjects of the ninth and tenth chapters. Deistic ideas, like other religious 'expressions of value-sense,' develop through social reactions. The interests which produce them are of the most various kinds, and we must be on our guard against one-sided explanations of their origin. There is "a natural transition from objects of attention to objects of real religious adoration." Situations of strained attention or interest, involving as they often do, a 'take care' or 'watch out' attitude, produce quite naturally in the savage mind the notion of a 'power' in the interesting object. This notion is most easily associated with living beings, human

and animal, and with their spirits after death, since these are natural objects of social interest. What further 'filling-in' of the idea of the deity remains to be explained "is in large measure due to the play of fancy as stimulated by human associations" (p. 258). The manifold myths of 'culture-heroes,' ranging from the clever trickster to the racial god, illustrate the various steps of the deifying process.

Such beliefs and ideas as these, with their associations of 'power' with conscious personal agents, "assist the primitive man in bringing his world, with its piecemeal conceptions of force, into personal relationship with himself" (p. 262). The Hebrew and Christian ideas of God are the results of the same laws which explain the appearance of monotheistic ideas elsewhere. So far as mere monotheism is concerned, it seems possible for it to appear at a relatively low stage of culture; for we must distinguish between psychological and metaphysical monotheism, and of the former "the essential elements are present in a merely tribal god (since) he is the symbol of the most dominating values in the tribe's experience" (p. 269). There is no such abrupt gap between primitive and more advanced religion and morals as is often assumed, from the standpoint of the higher civilization. "The actual presence in primitive *ethos* of all the fundamental human virtues" is plain to the unbiased observation of one who takes the genetic standpoint, as, for example, in the case of the central Australians (Chapter XI, Religion and Morals).

The topic of the twelfth chapter is the relation of religious values to the 'pathological,' or broadly speaking, to "unusual experiences and unusual motor-activities" (p. 308). Since religious values stand for the ultimate well-being of the individual or of the group, and, as social products, are reinforced by social suggestion, they are naturally "powerful excitants of the imagination and of the emotions" (p. 313). The abnormal phenomena thus produced are explained by the naïve mind, like other things connected with interesting social activities, by the quasi-hypothesis of a supernatural power; and this very hypothesis "tends to accentuate" the phenomena in question. The notion that we have special relations with the divine through the 'subconscious' must of course be rejected as a mere survival of primitive ideas; but nevertheless these unusual experiences have their own value in developing higher types of religion. In the first place, the subliminal stands, in part at least, for the values of past experience, and "the centre of consciousness, because it is primarily an adjusting apparatus, is often inadequate as an index to the entirety of life" (p. 327). In the second place, "mental pathology, up to a certain point, is . . . especially associated with the development of individuality" (p. 330)—the appearance of prophets. Social acceptance, the corre-

spondence to genuine human needs (p. 336) is however the ultimate test of the validity of the teaching promulgated by the prophet.—For, as the last chapter of the book argues, the question whether beliefs in the supernatural are essential to religion, while always pertinent, no matter how complete the psychological explanation of such ideas—for “one sort of experience cannot be said, offhand, to be more reliable than another kind” (p. 338)—must be decided in the light of our knowledge of how the beliefs originated. And this shows us that they are primarily ‘symbols’ of value, ‘working concepts,’ ‘practical hypotheses,’ the products and the ‘tools’ of attitudes.

In attempting a criticism of the book, it must be said, in the first place, that Dr. King has succeeded in what he describes as its primary purpose —“to contribute something toward the definition of social psychology by illustrating the application of psychological method in the interpretation of the data of a relatively limited field of social phenomena” (p. viii). There have been in this country a number of psychological studies of various phases of religion; this is the first to examine and utilize in a comprehensive way the data on primitive religion now so richly furnished by anthropology. While the exposition is not overburdened with the wealth of illustrative material thus available, that offered is aptly selected and thoroughly organized. The previous work in this field has often been classificatory rather than explanatory. It has halted with the enumeration of practices and of ideas, such as animism, ‘naturism,’ fetishism, ancestor-worship, which themselves needed explanation, or, if explained, still required an explanation of the way in which they became specifically religious. Primitive religion has often been arbitrarily identified with some one of these. The psychology consciously or unconsciously used by some of the most eminent anthropologists has been of the classical ratiocinative and associational type. Dr. King’s standpoint, and his emphasis upon the social and active character of primitive mind, enable him in large measure to substitute explanation for description, and to throw new light on some of the most vexed questions in savage beliefs and practices. The discussion of totemism at page 150, and that of so-called ‘high gods of low races’ at page 235, are admirable examples of this, though merely incidental to the general discussion.

It is, however, surprising that a work on the psychology of religion, published at this time, should take no account of the recent volumes of Wundt’s *Völkerpsychologie*. Some reference to Wundt’s account of ‘mythological apperception,’ and to his theory of the ‘bound’ or ‘fixed’ soul, would have been useful in considering the primitive idea of mysterious power, and its eventful incorporation in deities, which Dr. King explains

largely by association. At any rate, Wundt's theory must certainly be reckoned with.

Dr. King's identification of many early religious practices and ideas with the social activities of the group, and his explanation of their *original* ultimateness in value by the ultimateness of the group for the interest and experience of the individual at that time, seems to me well-founded. But I do not believe that by itself it will explain the nature of all religious *ideas*, especially the later ones, any more than an account of the origin of some æsthetic values in mimes and dances as social activities, let us say, explains the development of a sense of the sublime or beautiful in nature. Those who do not regard the 'instrumental' view as an adequate account of mind will naturally be disposed to allow more to that '*metaphysisches Bedürfniss*' of which Schopenhauer speaks in a similar connection. The theoretical interest certainly plays an important part in the history of religious ideas, and not all of religion belongs to the habitual side of mind. Dr. King points out the great share taken by 'reflection' in developing the more advanced 'historical' religions. Some consideration of the nature of 'reflection,' as an activity which interprets its objects rather than responds to them, might go far to establish a continuity in the various lines of the religious evolution which would not reside chiefly in a physical or social 'background' or 'environment' of the religious mind, and to justify a metaphysics as well as a psychology of religion—since it would show that there are other modes of explanation besides efficient causation. But this issue is too fundamental for discussion here.

The book is well and accurately printed. The note on page 13, which evidently was at first in the body of the text, should be restored to its original position, as its absence leaves an hiatus there. Sir Alfred Lyall is referred to in the Index, and on pages 191 and 248, as 'Charles.'

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Knowledge, Life and Reality; An Essay in Systematic Philosophy.

By GEORGE TRUMBULL LADD. New York, Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1909.—pp. x, 549.

The new book by Professor Ladd makes no profession of adding anything radically new or distinctive to the body of thought already worked out by this author in much detail throughout a series of well-known volumes. Nevertheless, it has a genuine and significant place to fill on the shelf of the *corpus Laddicum*. It is not only a sort of *omnium gatherum*, drawing all portions of the system into the conspectus of a single volume, but it is also in some sense a message to the gentiles, since its style and arrangement are designed to make it less formidable to the unwary than